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Common Ground

COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

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A NEW MAGNA CARTA

Declarations and Covenants do not as a rule make "best sellers", but here are two potential exceptions. The draft International Declaration and Covenant on Human Rights, submitted to the member Governments of the United Nations by the Human Rights Commission following its Geneva meeting last December, are so full of so much that is of importance for everybody that it is not too much to describe them as exciting!

The fact that they are likely to appear a good deal in the news during the coming weeks as they are worked over in preparation for the next meeting of the Commission in July, is sufficient warrant for all who are concerned about the work of this Council to make a careful study of them. For the very existence of the Council is occasioned by problems arising from the neglect or infringement of those human rights and fundamental freedoms which it is the purpose of these documents to define and to safeguard.

Commenting on this growing attention to human rights in "British Survey", the organ of the British Association for International Understanding, Professor Norman Bentwich wrote a few months ago:

"We appear to be entering on a new era and a new development of International Law, corresponding with the new era of history, in which Common Man, in the full sense of his personality, takes the place of 'Economic Man,' and Internationalism is the dominant force instead of Nationalism."

The Draft Declaration opens with the affirmation that all men are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and that they are endowed by nature with reason and conscience and should act towards one another like brothers. That sounds well enough as a general proposition, but must not be allowed to blind us to the urgent need for a careful working out of its implications. These are the subject of a series of articles dealing with the rights of the individual person to life, liberty, security, and to protection under the law and fair treatment in the courts; with the rights of migration, residence, and acquiring of nationality; with the right of asylum from persecution and the enjoyment of civil rights in any part of the world; with marriage and the family; with property rights, with education and religious liberty; with working conditions, with health and social security—and with political and civic rights and responsibilities.

It is a comprehensive statement though, paradoxically enough, not sufficiently comprehensive for the U.S.S.R., whose representative felt that the Draft was not sufficient for the protection of essential human rights! He therefore expressed his intention of presenting at a later stage a Soviet Declaration on Human Rights. In the meantime, it is worth observing that one of the most urgent needs in this field is for a clearer definition of terms. At the moment it appears that two people can use such words and phrases as the "democratic way of life", "fundamental freedoms", and "human rights", with very different meanings!

The Divine Origin of Human Rights

Another important issue was crystallised in an amendment to the article on marriage tabled by Mr. Charles Malik, the representative for Lebanon, stating that: "(Marriage) is endowed by the Creator with inalienable rights antecedent to all positive law." This, had it been adopted, would have constituted the only reference to God in the Declaration, but the Uruguayan representative, in opposing it, explained that his country would not accept any national or international document, whether legal or political, embodying assertions of a religious nature, on account of his country's constitution which provided for the separation of Church and State, though at the same time ensuring freedom of worship and instruction. Mr. Malik is not satisfied, however, and intends to press his point further in the next discussion. Whether the final form of the Declaration does, or does not, contain "any assertions of a religious nature", we cannot emphasise too strongly the fact that the only sufficient authority for

the affirmation and enjoyment of human rights lies in the recognition of their divine origin. Here we are faced with something much more important than a mere definition of terms. It is a matter of fundamentally different ways of looking at life.

Of particular interest to Christians and Jews is the way in which the subject of religious freedom and religious education is dealt with in Article 16 of the Draft Convention, which runs as follows:

1. "Every person shall have the right to freedom of religion, conscience and belief, including the right, either alone or in community with other persons of like mind, to hold and manifest any religious or other belief, and to practise any form of religious worship and observance, and he shall not be required to do any act which is contrary to such worship and observance.
2. "Every person of full age and sound mind shall be free, either alone or in a community with other persons of like mind, to give and receive any form of religious teaching, and in the case of a minor the parent or guardian shall be free to determine what religious teaching he shall receive.
3. "The above rights and freedoms shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public order and welfare, morals, and the rights and freedoms of others."

These paragraphs will be seen on examination to cover the main points of the Report on Religious Freedom adopted by the International Conference of Christians and Jews at Oxford in August, 1946, and it is worth noting that they are taken direct from a Draft Bill of Human Rights prepared by the British Foreign Office, and published as a White Paper in June, 1947.

Matters We Cannot Neglect

A problem of fundamental importance still to be considered concerns the means of implementing any agreement which may be reached between the nations, with regard to what Professor Bentwich describes as the "Magna Carta of the Common Man". Here we are face to face with questions of national sovereignty and the rights of any one nation, or group of nations, to "interfere" in the internal affairs of any other nation. There is also the fact that, while the Anglo-Saxon states and the Western Democracies believe in judicial bodies to enforce rights, the U.S.S.R. and its satellite countries distrust a judicial process which may be independent of political control.

These are clearly matters which we, the common people of the world, can ill afford to neglect. Neither the draft Declaration nor the Covenant are likely to command general agreement in their present form. But for all their limitations, and the problems still confronting those who have to revise or redraft them, it would be ungracious not to acknowledge that the very fact that such documents are under consideration at all, is in itself a positive achieve-

ment of great significance for the future well-being of mankind. At the Geneva meeting last December, the French representative asked that the following comment be inserted in the report of the Commission's findings. It may well stand for us also:

"In voting for the draft Declaration, the French delegation emphasised that it constitutes the first stage reached after eighteen months' work. Its defects do not detract from the fact that it contributes something new: the individual becomes a subject of international law in respect of his life and liberty; principles are affirmed, side by side with those already laid down by the majority of national laws which no national or international authority had hitherto been able to proclaim, let alone enforce."

FOR FURTHER READING.

- Draft Declaration & Draft Covenant on Human Rights.* U.N. Information Office, Russell Square House, London, W.C.1.
United Kingdom Draft of International Bill of Human Rights, 1947. H.M. Stationery Office, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.
Human Rights. British Survey, Vol. VIII, No. 10, July 1947: British Association for International Understanding, 36 Craven Street, London, W.C.2. Price 6d.
Defend These Human Rights. John Eppstein. Catholic Social Guild, Oxford. 1/-.
Human Rights. The First Round. John Eppstein. The Sword of the Spirit, 12 City Road, London, E.C.1. Price 3d.
Religious Liberty. By Cecil Northcott. S.C.M. Press, 56 Bloomsbury Street London, W.C.1. Price 6/-.

THE WAY TO MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

Roger Braun, S.J.*

The International Conference on Antisemitism held at Seelisberg in August, 1947, declared that the problem of Antisemitism could only be solved "by the co-operation of all men without distinction of race and creed." This co-operation will only be possible if on both sides prejudices are destroyed by a real effort after mutual understanding. *On both sides*—that is the essential point: on the Christian side *vis à vis* the Jews quite as much as on the Jewish side *vis à vis* the Christians.

In France during the occupation, a well-known Rabbi said to a group of Jewish youth: "In the past, I felt a deep antagonism towards the Catholic Church, but since I have come to know Father X, I do not know how I could continue to do so."

I have heard similar expressions from Christians too. And yet Jews and Christians had known one another long before that.

* see p. 12

But they had not understood one another. A barrier had grown up between them, which it was impossible to cross. What was wanting was understanding—which means communication.

The Common Aim

Such understanding involves, first and foremost, the recognition by each party of something precious in the other. The Jew, like the Christian of whatever creed, has God for his Aim. He is striving to establish the rule of God. On either side, there will no doubt be divergences of doctrine and divergences of method; but the Aim remains the same.

Those who look only at outward appearances will be held up by these divergences. They cannot get away from what I would call the horizontal plane. They will run their heads against the defensive wall which each of the different creeds, or denominations, or movements, has built about itself. All co-operation becomes impossible: there is no traffic through a wall.

In order to collaborate, I must learn to love, in him who thinks differently from me, that Aim which is common to us both, God Himself; and I must look for the reasons why we have chosen different ways to Him. We have each our freedom, and both freedoms, his and mine, must make contact, sympathetic contact too, within that common Aim. Provided I do not close my mind against all understanding of the other, I shall come to see how and why we differ. Love of the Aim which we have in common, love for my brother who is following a different path from mine, will help me to understand. Love itself may not see, but it gives me eyes to see with. We must love in order to see and to understand.

If we do not understand enough, it is because we do not love enough. "Sympathy," in the Bergsonian sense, grows out of ordinary sympathy. We need to exercise sympathy, i.e. to *suffer with* another, to share his feelings.

Along this road, I will not stop half-way; I shall always feel the need to go still further, I shall never cry: "Enough!"

Understanding Another's Point of View

By trying to adopt—provisionally, in my own mind—the point of view of another, I shall look for the opening through which I can enter into communication with him, and that as intimately as possible. I would wish to enter his very soul, so as to feel with him and follow the whole evolution of his personality—beginning, if need be, from its deep-hidden roots, and working up to its most recent manifestations, through the whole course of his development.

It is a question, then, of leaving the horizontal plane where I find myself checked, and of following the vertical plane: seeing what went to the formation of this mentality, against which I clash on the horizontal level. If need be, in my dealings with him, I shall use a terminology that is not mine—but his. History, universal, national

and religious; his own personal history, his upbringing and family education; the study of human psychology—all will help me to continue along that road, nor, let me repeat, shall I ever give up and say, "Enough!"

Then, perhaps, I shall at last discover where I am wrong, where I am wanting in understanding.

Both Have Responsibilities

In so delicate and vast a problem as Antisemitism, Jews as well as Christians have their responsibilities. To fasten these solely on "the others," and to believe oneself to be beyond reproach, is perhaps a rooted conviction; it is not the truth.

The truth is that Jews and Christians alike have let themselves go in a career of misunderstandings, of sins against elementary psychology; they have taken up positions that are offensive and—we must risk the word—totalitarian; they have been inspired to all this not by their Faith, but by egoism alone. Both sides, equally.

"Do not to others what you would not that others do to you." This rule, which is taught both among Christians and Jews, has unfortunately had little influence in Jewish-Christian relations, and that for all too long.

If the Christian would sympathetically pass in review the whole history of Judaism, the growth of its doctrine and of its customs, the rich treasury of its prayers, he would get a clear-cut realisation of what it is in his own attitude which puts off the Jew and keeps him at a distance. He would understand too the complex character of modern Judaism, which hitherto he had not loved, because of his running up against it only on the horizontal plane.

And if the Jew, too, will with sympathy consider the very source of Christianity, the Gospel—"that moral flowering of Jewish monotheism", as it was called by Rabbi Stefan Wise; or again, "the merit of Israel, whom Thou hast elected to bring the light of the faith to the nations of the world for Thy glory and out of Thy love of mankind" (Sholem Asch, *The Apostle*),—and if he will follow, with a like goodwill, the development of Christian dogma and of its demands, he will in his turn come to understand why he has given offence to the Christian.

Because both have inherited attitudes that are partisan, even brutal, they are still living now, at times, like brothers at war.

Rebuilding the Future

Will not Israel, ill at ease to-day in Christian lands, make life difficult tomorrow—is it not running the risk of making life difficult tomorrow—for the Christians in its Jewish State? It is said at times that already to-day, even before the inauguration of that State, such difficulties have not been wanting. And so, can one fail to put oneself the question, whether after combating Antisemitism to-day, we may not—which God forbid!—have to combat anti-Christianity tomorrow?

Yet if we want to rebuild the future, we must shut out hate and allow love alone to enter.

As Jews and Christians, we come from the same Father, and, in the words of St. Irenaeus, we have both had the same Tutor. We must imitate this divine Father, this divine Tutor, who in the long course of history has given to each, according to his needs and capacities, "that page of revelation to spell out" which was appropriate to his needs.

Like brothers of the same family, Jews and Christians have quarrelled and abused each other. But both, if only they know how to read their family history, can recognise the same family spirit. They can, if only they are willing, discover, in the very evolution of their history, of their education and of their fashioning, the true means of coming to understand one another, and the reasons for the fullest collaboration compatible with loyalty to their faith.

EDUCATION FOR TOLERANCE

An American Viewpoint

Russell D. Brackett is Principal of an important High School for Girls in Minneapolis. Still a young man, he has been interested for some years in the problem created for the American educationist by the fact that the children in his school are drawn from a wide background of different cultural traditions. Are those differences, which are often a cause of tension in the life of the school, to be ignored, overridden, or woven into the texture of the American way of life? Brackett's answer is emphatically in favour of the third of these alternatives, and his policy as a High School principal has been to develop what he and those who think like him describe as a system of intercultural education.

His success in this field led to his being invited by Dr. Everett R. Clinchy, President of the National Conference of Christians and Jews in the U.S.A., to come to Europe for twelve months under the auspices of the International Council, to study educational problems on this side of the Atlantic, and to consider how far the development of intercultural education is possible under European conditions.

He is at present stationed in the headquarters of the International Council of Christians and Jews in Geneva, where I met him a few weeks ago and discussed with him the background of his work in the United States, his first impressions of the educational situation in Europe, and the plans for a conference of European educationists which he is organising for this summer.

A World-Wide Need

Brackett believes that the need for intercultural education is world-wide. No nation, nor any group of nations, he pointed out,

is free from serious problems of human relations, in every field of its life, whether social, political, religious or economic. In the ultimate solution of those problems education must necessarily play a most important part. "Fundamentally," he said, "every school must train its students to be responsible world citizens. A good world citizen will automatically be a better national and local citizen. In fact, without being the latter, it will be impossible to be the former."

When I asked him what he meant by intercultural education in terms of a school programme, he explained that there was no question of introducing any new subject into the curriculum. Rather it implies the pervasion of the entire life of the school, in and out of the classroom, with an attitude of deep respect for each human personality and of interest in the other person's point of view.

Such an attitude, he believes, cannot flourish in an authoritarian environment. It calls for a democratic atmosphere, in which students and staff share each other's point of view. "Students," said Professor Brackett, "must be treated as something more than passive receptive basins into which to pour information."

When I asked what the development of this atmosphere and attitude called for in the way of actual teaching, he stressed the importance of students becoming familiar with facts about people all over the world. But not just facts. Children must be encouraged to appreciate their similarities as human beings, and to recognise the interdependence of all peoples, particularly the way in which representatives of diverse national, racial and religious groups have contributed to the sum total of world culture.

There is a need also for some teaching about anthropology, and psychology, while history must be taught in such a way as to indicate the place of any one nation in relation to the whole development of world history.

The Value of Experience

Important as such teaching is, however, the greatest need is the encouragement of experiences likely to foster happy inter-group relations. Attitudes cannot be taught, they must be lived and experienced. Young people must learn to work and play together; they must plan and carry through on their own, projects of a social and educational character, though parents and teachers can do much to help in creating the right atmosphere for such adventures.

It was clear from what Dr. Brackett told me of the work of his own school, and of the relations he has established, not only between the students themselves but also between students and staff, and between staff and parents, that he is no mere educational theorist but one who practises what he preaches—or perhaps, I ought to say, preaches what he practises, for his interests are primarily in action.

Educational Needs in Europe

When I asked him what he thought about the situation in

Europe, he was emphatic as to the need for, but under no illusions as to the difficulties of, developing a programme of intercultural education. European educationists, he feels, tend to look to the past rather than the future. "The traditional classical mould of most European education," he said, "lends itself less readily to intercultural education than does the freer system in which student activity and initiative have been encouraged. In certain European countries, the educational responsibility of the school has been too narrowly conceived in terms of intellectual training, and the 'pouring in' of facts." "The training of young people for responsible membership of society," he continued, "has usually been considered as the task of the home rather than as one which should be shared by both school and home."

He feels, moreover, that the present buildings and equipment in many European schools are not very suitable for the kind of programme he would like to see undertaken. The general atmosphere of many of the buildings he has seen is depressing, desks are arranged rigidly in rows, and there are no adequate meeting halls for the whole student body.

But he is not without hope that something effective can be done, even where conditions fall far short of the ideal, and with this end in view he is concentrating on the arrangements for the Conference of European Educationists, which, as I mentioned at the beginning of this article, is to be held in Switzerland this summer.

W. W. S.

FROM THE SECRETARY'S NOTEBOOK

Palestine

The continuing deadlock at the political level in relation to the Palestine situation, with its increasingly serious implications both for the Holy Land itself and in the general field of human relations outside Palestine, places a still greater burden of responsibility on the religious leaders of all the communities concerned.

That this responsibility is deeply felt is evidenced by a number of recent statements by religious leaders in this country, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, who on several

occasions has appealed to Muslim and Jewish religious leaders as well as to his fellow-Christians to unite in an attempt to secure a truce at least within Jerusalem itself.

At the international level telegrams have been sent in the names of the Joint-Presidents of the International Council of Christians and Jews, Dr. Henry Noble MacCracken of New York, Professor Jacques Maritain, the French Ambassador to the Vatican, and Lord Reading, to the Jewish Agency, the Arab Higher Committee, and the Secretary-

General of the United Nations, appealing to them to take whatever steps are necessary to safeguard the Holy Places in Palestine.

As the telegram rightly emphasises no one, even among the most zealous partisans, can view with equanimity the possible destruction of the Holy Places or be unaware of the universal public revulsion that would follow such a calamity.

But neither can we view with equanimity such a disaster as the recent attack on the Hadassah University Convoy which was taking doctors, nurses, patients and university teachers from the city of Jerusalem to Mount Scopus, and which resulted in the death of some of the most distinguished medical and scientific workers in Palestine. In their loss not the Jewish community only, but the Arab also, is involved, for the work of Hadassah has always been, as it was first envisaged by its founder, Henrietta Schulz, a work of humanity for humanity.

Such a tragedy, however, great as it is, is being daily repeated in the suffering and death of men, women and children of both communities. We can only pray that this increasing tragedy, falling as it does on Arab and Jew alike, may bring home to their respective leaders more speedily and more effectively than any other argument, the folly of persisting in a conflict which can bring satisfaction to neither, but only disaster to

themselves and a growing menace to the peace of the world.

East London

Since the last issue of these notes in which I referred to the launching of Mosley's "Union Movement," discussions have been going on between representatives of this Council and of the Council of East London Citizens, which was originally set up by Dr. J. J. Mallon of Toynbee Hall, when Mosley's pre-war activities were causing so much unrest in the East End, and which has been re-constituted to deal with the present situation.

As a result of these discussions, it has been agreed that the two Councils should co-operate in a scheme for combating antisemitism and other forms of group tension by educational means. It is proposed to appoint a full-time officer to work under the direction of the Council of East London Citizens in enlisting the active support and co-operation of those who hold positions of responsibility in public administration, voluntary associations, religious organisations and in industry and commerce.

He will be responsible also for the organisation of talks, discussion groups, and conferences, working primarily with leaders, but gradually extending the direct influence of the Council to the rank and file members of the community. Reported incidents in which any form of group

prejudice is involved will be carefully investigated and, as far as possible, appropriate action taken.

The Council of Christians and Jews, which has no local organisation of its own in the East End, has undertaken to give substantial financial backing to this vitally important piece of work, and any special contribution towards it will be most gratefully received.

A Giant Refreshed

A few months ago I reported that our Executive Chairman, the Rev. Henry Carter, had undergone a serious operation. At that time we were very anxious as to the chances of his recovery, and completely in the dark as to how much of his former work he would be able to take up again if he did recover.

It is therefore with the greatest satisfaction that I am now able to report that he has not only completely recovered from the effects of the operation, but seems likely to do at least as much, if not more than he was doing before he went into hospital. And that, in Henry Carter's case, is saying something! I understand—and only those who know anything of his piscatorial prowess will fully appreciate what this means—that his recent adventures with rod and line have been more successful than ever!

But that is off the record! More to the point is the fact that he has asked me to convey to all the members and friends of the Council who sent mes-

sages to him during his illness his heartfelt thanks for their kindness, and particularly to Lord Reading, who took over the responsibilities of Executive Chairmanship during his absence.

An Evening Out

"A most enjoyable and useful evening and an eye-opener." That was how one of the members of the Hackney Boys' Club summed up a recent visit by thirty members of this East London Jewish Club to the Kingston Y.M.C.A. The leader described the occasion as "a terrific success from all points of view."

But it wasn't only the Jewish members of the party who enjoyed themselves. The Y.M.C.A. leader who wrote to tell us that "the occasion was a very happy one," went on to say that there was no doubt in his mind that "the evening achieved what we intended it should—that Christians and Jews should be brought together to know and understand each other better, and it did much to overcome racial and religious prejudices."

And the programme? Well—there appear to have been games (not Club against Club but tournaments in which all the names went into the same hat!) refreshments, and a joint discussion. Incidentally, the Y.M.C.A. group had invited a Jewish speaker earlier in the same week to give them a talk on Jewish affairs.

A first-class piece of work but—why only Hackney and Kingston? Other clubs please copy.

And Another One !

Since making the above jotting about the Hackney-Kingston party, I have myself attended a similar function arranged by the Central London Christian - Jewish Youth Circle (a "subsidiary" of the Council) which is building up a programme of joint activities for members of Jewish and Christian youth organisations in the Central London area.

This particular "evening" took place at the West London Synagogue and offered an interesting assortment of refreshments, Brains Trusts, games—and some very good company. Other evenings are in process of arrangement, the next being on June 30th, and the place, Whitfield's Tabernacle, Tottenham Court Road, where a Youth Discussion Circle which meets every Wednesday, will act as hosts.

For further information—write to Miss Olga Anderson, Secretary of the Youth Circle, at the Council's offices.

Local Councils

Latest developments in the field of local Council activity are the official launching of the Bristol Council under the Presidency of the Lord Mayor of Bristol, on May 5th, and a meeting in Hull, also under the chairmanship of the Lord Mayor, on May 19th, to inaugurate plans for the development of our work in that area. Another item of interest under this heading is the appointment of Mr. L. L. Hanbidge

as full-time Organising Secretary by the Manchester Council. We are hoping that Mr. Hanbidge will be able to assist the Councils in Leeds and Liverpool, and also to strengthen some of the contacts already made in Lytham St. Anne's, Southport, and one or two other centres in the Lancashire-Yorkshire area.

A French Angle

A recent visit to Paris for a meeting of the Refugee Commission of the World Council of Churches gave me an opportunity for meeting a number of people, Christians and Jews, who were anxious to learn more about the work of the International Council, and of what we are doing in this country.

Among these was a young Jesuit priest, Père Roger Braun, S.J., with whom I had a long and stimulating discussion on the importance of working for better understanding between Jews and Christians. At the end of our time together, I suggested that he might let me have an article for *Common Ground* (of which, by the way, he expressed himself a regular and appreciative reader), and he gladly agreed. This article, which has been translated into English for us by Father Maurice Bévenot, of Heythrop College (a member of the provisional Executive of the International Council of Christians and Jews), appears on another page of this issue.

A Healthy Sign

A report that a West End restaurant had refused to serve

a meal to a coloured person was recently the subject of discussion in the House of Commons. An interview between the manager of the restaurant and the Ministry of Food, resulted in Mr. Strachey's receiving a letter expressing regret for what had happened, and giving an unqualified undertaking to prevent such an incident recurring again.

The Minister's comment in the House is worth remembering. "I am satisfied," he said, "that the very serious character of the incident has been brought home to the Managing Director, and that he now understands the grave injury that is done to the interests of the British Commonwealth by any form of racial discrimination."

It needs but one more phrase to complete it, and that would be to insert after the words "of the British Commonwealth" the words "and indeed of the whole human race."

Pass It On

Are We looking for a Scapegoat? is the title of an article by the Rev. H. R. Barton, Rector of Studland, first published in the *Dorset County Chronicle*, and now reprinted as a pamphlet with a letter of commendation by the Bishop of Stepney. For our present Associate Members, it may not contain anything new. But for those who are not already in touch with the Council, it may start up a new train of thought. A copy is being sent with this bulletin. Will you therefore please pass it on to a Christian friend?

BOOK NOTES

The Jewish New Year Festival

By N. H. Snaith
(S.P.C.K., London, 1947. 13/6)

The main contention of this book is that the Jewish New Year goes back to a pre-exilic autumnal harvest festival, with thanksgiving for blessings received and prayer for blessings desired, above all, prayer for rain. From the eighth century B.C., when difficulties increased, the desire for a change of fate became the dominant motif. In post-exilic times, Tishri was a day of remembrance and judgment on the part of God, and of penitence and supplication on the part

of the people. But it was not until the second century A.D., the period of the final war with the Romans, that a particular connection was established between this feast and the idea of the Kingdom of God.

This view involves rejection of the fashionable theory that the pre-exilic Hebrew New Year was a King-festival after the Babylonian pattern; and more particularly, rejection of Mowinckel's doctrine that the "Coronation Psalms" represent the liturgy once used on that occasion. It involves acceptance of L. Ginsberg's thesis that the Malkiyyoth were added to the earlier Zikhronoth

and Shopharoth in the time of R. Akiba.

In the course of his inquiry, the author goes into various changes of the calendar. He argues that the pre-exilic month began with the full moon, *chodesh* then meaning "new-month day," i.e. full-moon day. The Sabbath was the new-moon day: the word meant "closing-day," i.e. end of the first half of the month. Neither *chodesh* nor Sabbath in that epoch was a taboo-rest day; both were days of joy and cessation of work. It was later reforms of the calendar, partly under Mesopotamian influence, which were responsible for the post-exilic and Rabbinic developments.

The book is so clearly written that it may be recommended to laymen as well as scholars. It is full of fascinating suggestions. (As for I Kings 1, the reviewer wonders whether Professor Snaith might not have adduced Deuteronomy 34. 7, "nor his natural force abated," in support of his interpretation.) The arguments advanced are backed by profound learning, judiciously applied. The way in which Rabbinic sources and the Jewish liturgy are handled deserves particular praise. The concluding chapter, with its more general discussion of the admissibility of Mesopotamian evidence and of distinctive Palestinian tendencies, should be taken to heart by all students of the history of the Jewish religion.

David Daube

Religious Liberty

By Cecil Northcott
(S.C.M. Press Ltd., 6/-)

Religious liberty is one of the questions which the ordinary man can ill afford to leave to experts to discuss. It affects his own interests too nearly. So much more is involved than questions of liberty alone, important though they are. Cecil Northcott's recent book on Religious Liberty challenges us to consider the significance of religion to everyday life, and its implications about race theories, state plans and policies. The author makes it abundantly clear that religious freedom is, in fact, an integral part of the total problem of human rights.

The subject, therefore, comes properly within the concern of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations. This fact is all the more important when we remember that all over the world, men are in fresh danger of losing their liberties. In some parts of Europe to-day, religious liberty, to a large extent, exists only in name. We cannot, therefore, over-estimate the importance of preparing ourselves by thought and study, so that we may be alive to the implications of these discussions and ready to play a part, however humble, in defending and realising the highest values of life.

Cecil Northcott is an Englishman and a Christian. His work is therefore most detailed in respect of the development of religious liberty in England,

and in reference to the Christian Church. But no prospective reader need be deterred by this. In his chapter on "What is Religious Liberty?" Mr. Northcott lays down principles which have universal validity. Neither can he be accused of overlooking the faults of his own nation or church. He sees them, and states them clearly. "It is one of the paradoxes of Christianity," he writes, "that it holds within itself revolutionary teaching about liberty for the individual and what often seems to be a reactionary intolerance in dealing with the results of liberty." In a chapter on "Christianity and Religious Liberty," he traces the struggle towards a deeper understanding of religious liberty within the Christian church, and concludes with a warning that "religious liberty belongs to the individual within a religious community, as well as to the community itself." He adds that the individual has a right of conscience not only to change his allegiance, but "to persuade others to do likewise." (These last six words may be challenged by many people who yet think seriously about religious liberty. Around the conviction they represent, and their various interpretations, differences have arisen and may arise in the future.)

Closely allied with Religious Liberty, especially if Religion is recognised as Life itself, is the question of Minorities. For a number of years there

has been a growing international conscience about minorities, resulting in a certain amount of action. Yet no thinking person could accept as satisfactory the present status of minorities anywhere in the world. Perhaps it would be truer to say that nowhere is the majority-minority relationship satisfactory, since it must be a two-way relationship, and this problem can never be solved within the framework of a state which is in any sense totalitarian. Mr. Northcott has some thought-provoking paragraphs on the subject. Amongst other things, he says that there must be a just treatment for religious minorities incumbent on all states alike, and not only on certain states. The question as to what is a just treatment for both minority and majority within a state, is one of the most difficult problems with which the United Nations Commission is likely to have to deal.

Is This The Way ?

By Dr. Walter Zander
(Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1/-)

This pamphlet represents a new approach to the Palestine problem and has already evoked a great deal of interest. The author begins by boldly facing the difficulties confronting those who would build a Jewish state. His title is taken from an essay, *This Is Not The Way*, written in 1889 by the famous Jewish thinker, Ahad Ha'am, in which the latter

warns that the return to Zion must be preceded by a "revival of the heart," and that unless the Jewish attitude to the Arabs is not one of wise friendship and co-operation, the whole movement will inevitably break down.

Dr. Zander maintains that the Jewish-Arab problem has remained the core of the matter, and has been continually underestimated by the Jews. "Not only did we fail to give the Arab problem first priority; we also deceived ourselves about the seriousness of Arab opposition." This point he stresses again and again, stating clearly that the establishment of a Jewish state requires a great sacrifice of the Arabs. This creates a particular responsibility and obligation on the Jewish side.

Dr. Zander does not exonerate Great Britain from blame, but he argues that there has also been failure on the Jewish side in its relations with this country. "However much the British have failed on their side, they have never promised us what we had asked them to give the Jewish state. Justice demands that this fact be fully recognised by all."

Dr. Zander concludes by saying that in the last analysis, the failure springs from spiritual causes. "Essentially," he writes, "the Palestinian crisis is not political, but spiritual." This pamphlet is one of the bravest and most thoughtful contributions to the understanding and solution of the crisis, and we commend it to every reader of "Common Ground."

PRESS REVIEW

COMMENTARY

Great prominence is again given to Palestine. Editorial comments and readers' letters continuously uphold the decision to withdraw British troops. In the provincial press, a certain desire arising out of loss of British lives, is expressed that Great Britain should give up all connection with the country as soon as possible. The more serious section of the London press (together with the *Scotsman*), reflects a feeling that Great Britain cannot rid herself of all responsibility. Cyril Falls, in an important article in the *Illustrated London News* (April 10) on British policy in Palestine, writes: "There has been a complete failure to solve the political as well as the military problem involved." He discusses whether Britain is justified in her policy of complete withdrawal and divestment of responsibility.

In the main, however, in connection with the discussions of the Security Council in America, and the Palestine Bill in England, the predominant reactions are discouragement and uncertainty.

While a number of papers reiterate that, whatever happens, Great Britain has a record in Palestine of which she can be proud, the *Times* (March 20), commenting on the Palestine Bill, says: "It puts on formal record the failure of this country, in spite of heavy sacrifice and devoted effort, to devise a settlement whereby Jews and Arabs can live together peaceably."

By the middle of April, the demand all over the country becomes more insistent that Great Britain should give up her responsibilities in Palestine. Yet, faced with news of increasing chaos and loss of life, there begins to creep into the weeklies a note of interrogation as to whether the British authorities are losing control more than they should. While blame is still laid on the U.N. and on U.S.A. a few periodicals criticise Great Britain (*Truth, Time & Tide, Economist, British Weekly*). One of the dailies, the *Western Morning News* (April 13), concludes that when, in August, we shall have "washed our hands" of Palestine, they "will not be very clean."

The outrage at Deir Yasin causes widespread, and particularly sharp, protest. "If Deir Yasin was morally wrong, it was also politically stupid." (*Manchester Guardian*, April 13)

Both articles and letters reflect awareness of international danger so long as the Palestine problem remains unsolved.

Widespread rumours of the entry, or threatened entry, of Arab forces into Palestine, make headlines for a time, but towards the end of April some papers admit that a cautious attitude must be maintained in face of reports which may not be accurate. The unceasing and varying negotiations for a truce, or an emergency régime, for Jerusalem, or for Palestine, occupy daily news-space.

As a general summing-up, two points should be noted. The first is the prominence given to Palestine in every section of the British press. The second is that, taking the press as a whole, although leaders and comments are frequently devoted to the subject, their contents—whether from the secular or the religious point of view—are disappointingly poor; invariably little more than a monotonous reiteration that time is running short, and somebody ought to do something. Amongst the periodicals which offer the most thoughtful material should be named two representatives of the religious press; the *Tablet*, and the *British Weekly*.

The extreme Leftist press, and one or two religious weeklies, make a great issue of the influence of American oil interests. The *Daily Worker* associates the Arabs with the forces of imperialism.

A few periodicals representing very varied interests, e.g., *Truth, Economist*, some of the Roman Catholic weeklies, have shown a tendency either to link Jewry with Communism, or to underline a connection between Russia and certain Jewish elements.

The decision of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, of March 21, is reported widely in the provincial, as well as in the London press.

DIARY

March 1, 1948: Questions asked in House of Commons on Arms Supply to Jews and Arabs in Palestine.

Strongly worded British official statement addressed in Palestine to Jewish Agency and Community.

March 2: Security Council informed that Great Britain could not support American resolution committing Council to carrying out Partition, nor could a British member be appointed to committee whose duties would include giving guidance to Palestine Commission.

March 4: Communist purge of Czech Judicial Bench.

March 9: Letter published in Prague from Catholic dignitaries; "in all aspects of Catholic life we shall stand above parties and outside politics."

March 10: Masaryk commits suicide in Prague.

Amendment to reject Palestine Bill negatived by 240 votes to 30. Opposition abstained, but expressed misgivings.

Pope directs the faithful to vote in the Italian General Elections for candidates who "safeguard laws of God and Christian moral doctrine."

March 11: Letter in *Times* from Refugees Defence Committee, protesting against British Government's surrender of Yugoslav refugees to Yugoslav Government for trial.

Explosion shatters H.Q. Jewish Agency, Jerusalem.

March 12: Letter signed by Lord Reading in *Times* points out danger of assuming that a Jewish State would, or could, claim exercise of jurisdiction over Jews, other than citizens of Jewish State.

Agreement ratified under which Haganah and Irgun Zvai Leumi unified under single command.

March 15: Arab Higher Committee repeat only one independent state for whole of Palestine acceptable.

British Government decides no member of Communist party or person actively associated with Fascist organisations, to be retained in employment of state, on work vital to security.

March 19: America withdraws support for Partition proposals and suggests setting up temporary trusteeship.

Russia gives no direct or indirect support.

March 21: Board of Deputies of British Jews defeats, by 227 votes to 35, motion that it was undesirable, in present circumstances, that Board's President should simultaneously be member of Jewish Agency Executive.

March 22: Cardinal Griffin sends letter to British Foreign Secretary, proposing formation of Christian Defence Force to protect Palestine Holy Places.

March 23: Jewish Agency declares formation of Jewish State on May 16.

Russia rejects idea of Trusteeship.

March 29: Archbishop of York appeals to United Nations, particularly U.S.A., to save Jerusalem from destruction.

March 31: Cairo-Haifa train mined. British casualties: 40 killed, 60 wounded.

April 1: Security Council agrees to ask for a truce in Palestine and to convoke special session of General Assembly to consider future government.

April 2: Mr. Mackenzie King declares "freedom is threatened not only by military force, but by an organised conspiracy to establish a tyranny over the human mind."

April 4: High Commissioner in Palestine asks for a "Cease Fire."

April 6: 1 officer, 6 other ranks killed or wounded in attack by Jews (believed to be members of Irgun) on camp in Palestine.

April 7: Dr. Benes speaks at ceremony marking 600th anniversary of Charles University, Prague. "It is imperative to cultivate and to attain a universal freedom of the spirit—the essential condition of all genuine spiritual life."

Low Week statement issued by Catholic Hierarchy of England and Wales condemning Communism and giving a 6-point statement of religious and social principles by which alone it can be met.

April 8: Letter in *Times* saying that relief committee has been formed in London by representatives of Czechoslovak political refugees.

Letter in *Times* from rectors of all colleges in Brno denying that academic and scientific freedom has been interfered with in any illegitimate way in Czechoslovakia. *Times* leader quotes the main principle of the letter with some "misgiving."

April 9: Jews and Arabs at Lake Success make truce conditional on mutually unacceptable terms.

Palestine: Battle for Castel. Massacre of Arabs at Deir Yasin.

Archbishop of Canterbury pleads urgently to Jew and Arab leaders to call truce within Jerusalem.

Minister for Social Welfare, Prague, states that up to April 6, approximately 8,300 persons affected by Czechoslovak political purge, exclusive of those who left to go into exile.

April 10: Letter in *Times* from J. A. Malcolm suggesting new approach to Palestine problem. Re-integration of Transjordan with Cisjordan Palestine to form single Arab-Israel State. King Abdullah as sovereign, Jewish Prime Minister and many adjustments to preserve Arab-Jewish balance.

Letter in *Times* from James E. Wright, warning against a "new totalitarianism" developing in democratic West, which is different only in degree from conditions in Eastern Europe.

April 12: *Times* reports that organisation of Roman Catholic trade unions now covers almost whole country.

Letter in *Times* refuting contention of letter from Brno (April 8) and insisting that political persecution has taken place against Czechoslovakian professors.

- April 13:* Arabs attack Jewish medical convoy on Mt. Scopus. Palestine Commission criticises Gt. Britain for alleged lack of co-operation.
- April 14:* Archbishop of Canterbury in London accuses United Nations of being dilatory and ineffective in dealing with Palestine.
- April 15:* Palestine Commission urgently recommends shipment of 25,000 tons flour to Palestine.
Peace demonstration of several thousand Orthodox Jews in Jerusalem broken up by Haganah.
- April 16:* Neo-Fascist demonstration in Rome. 50,000 Neo-Fascists march through Naples.
- April 20:* Draft agreement for trusteeship of Palestine introduced to General Assembly.
- April 21:* Italian Election results. Christian Democrats obtain clear majorities in both Houses of Parliament.
- April 22:* Large scale Jewish attack on Haifa. King Abdullah calls on Arab countries to join in action against Zionists after British leave.
- April 23:* Massed exodus of Arabs from Haifa.
- April 24:* London, Albert Hall meeting to rally Christians to action in European crisis.
- April 25:* Jews heavily mortaring Jaffa. Arabs fleeing from town.
At Arab meeting in Amman, King Abdullah's plans accepted: full agreement on co-operation in defence of, and entry into, Palestine.
- April 26:* King Abdullah demands placing of Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth under Arab protection.
Arabs announce formation of Arab State of Palestine after British leave, failing agreement on Trusteeship.
Iraq Petroleum Co. ceases pumping at Haifa.
- April 27:* Agreement between Haganah and I.Z.L. for full military co-operation throughout Palestine.
Motion tabled by Conservative group in House of Commons, criticising Government's conduct of affairs in Palestine.
Times leader states paralysis of administration in Palestine.
- April 28:* British order Jews, Cease Fire in Jaffa.
Mr. Platt-Mills expelled from Labour Party for responsibility in sending Nenni telegram.
- April 29:* Home Secretary bars political processions for three months in certain areas, in face of Mosley's intended May 1 Fascist rally.
- April 30:* Heavy firing in Jerusalem.

